

PRESS RELEASE

**Williams College Museum of Art Presents  
AIDS: An African Crisis, A World Problem**

December 2–5, 2008

Williamstown, Mass.– In observance of World AIDS Day, December 1, the Williams College Museum of Art (WCMA) presents a four-day screening of the documentary *Sons of Lwala* (2008). Additionally, the museum shop will sell jewelry and other products from [BeadforLife.org](http://BeadforLife.org), a non-profit organization based in Uganda that teaches African women the craft of paper-bead making; all proceeds go to the income of these women. This documentary screening and museum shop sale, organized by Graduate Art History student Gillian Pistell, strives to spread awareness of the AIDS crisis in Africa, but it also gives individuals a way to contribute financial support to the fight against AIDS. A special screening of *Sons of Lwala* will be held on Tuesday, December 2 at 4:15 pm at WCMA. A discussion with Williams Economics professor Kiaran Honderich will follow about her work in Africa with HIV/AIDS. Refreshments will also be served. The film will be on view in the museum's Media Field Gallery from Tuesday through Friday, December 2-5, 10:00 am to 5:00 pm.

*Sons of Lwala* is a documentary that traces the journey of two brothers from Kenya, Milton and Fred Ochieng. After Lwala, their hometown, assisted the two brothers in raising money for their airfare to go to the United States to attend medical school, the two men return home to discover that both of their parents

have died. In a town where no medical facilities exist and the closest one is several miles away, the Ochieng brothers decide to complete the work their father began to build a medical clinic in their town. Unable to raise the money themselves, they appeal to friends in the United States for help. As word of their plight spreads across the country, a nationwide movement is started to save Lwala.

BeadforLife.org is a non-profit organization in Uganda that teaches women the craft of paper-bead making and then sells their products worldwide. The income these women earn allows them to pay for much-needed medical supplies, food, and education for their children. Forty-three percent of these women deal personally with HIV/AIDS in some way; some are suffering from it themselves, others have lost relatives and children, and many others care for AIDS orphans. Products made by these women can be purchased in the museum shop from November 28 to December 28, 2008. These products provide individuals the opportunity to contribute to the fight against AIDS and poverty in Uganda and to make an impact in the lives of African women. For more information, visit [www.BeadforLife.org](http://www.BeadforLife.org).

“The purpose of this year's World AIDS Day events is to not only bring awareness of the magnitude of the epidemic in Africa, but to also help fight the problem through much needed monetary support,” explains Pistell. “The AIDS epidemic is in fact the world's problem, and as citizens of this world, it is our responsibility to help those affected by it. I want the community to recognize this fact and to become active in the efforts to fight AIDS in Africa.”

#### About World AIDS Day

World AIDS Day, December 1, was first held in 1988 in order to increase awareness and education about the disease and through this understanding stop the spread of HIV/AIDS. For more information about AIDS, please visit the following websites:

<http://unaids.org>

<http://www.avert.org>

<http://www.worldaidscampaign.info>

<http://www.worldaidsday.org>

Gillian Pistell is a Graduate Student in the History of Art at Williams College, Class of 2010 and an intern at the museum. Her work in organizing these events continues a 17-year tradition of AIDS day projects at WCMA.

#### Related Events

Tuesday, December 2

Screening of *Sons of Lwala* and discussion with Kiaran Honderich, Visiting Associate Professor of Economics, Williams College

4:15 pm at WCMA

For more information on other World AIDS Day events at Williams College, please contact the Chaplin's Office at 413-597-2483.

The Williams College Museum of Art is open Tuesday through Saturday, from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm, and on Sunday from 1:00 to 5:00 pm. Admission is free and the museum is wheelchair accessible.